

Continuum General Assembly Minutes

Date and Time

Thursday, March 21st, 2013 12:00PM-1:00PM

Location

Federal Building, 3rd Floor, HUD Conference Room, 275 Chestnut Street, Manchester, NH

Attendees

Cathy Kuhn	Dave Carroll	Rob Smith	Laurel Redden	Susan Howland
Candace Gebhart	Dominique Rust	Jay Mattia	Mark Stokes	Teresa Lombardi
Casey Krafton	Ed Orlowski	Jocelyne Pinsonneault	Matt Leahy	
Cate Sementa	Elise Annunziata	Katie Simpson	Mary Sliney	
Craig Chevalier	Heather Aicholtz	Kevin Kintner	Monica Zulauf	

February Minutes Approved

NH Legal Assistance

- Candace Gebhart attended the meeting to discuss local welfare with the CoC members.
- City Welfare uses budget worksheet guidelines when determining whether to assist a client.
 - All Welfare guidelines are available online.
- Financial need and inability to support themselves are the only criteria for Welfare to help people.
 - They cannot turn people away who move from other cities.
 - Anyone who wishes to be a Manchester resident must be helped.
 - Clients do not need to provide any verification.
 - This is the caseworkers' job.
 - They must provide rental utility, food, and other assistance to those in need.
 - If a person needs help with a car payment and they are employed (and the car is their only way to get to their job), Welfare must help them with their car payment.
 - They cannot claim to have helped a client months prior and deny service now.
 - They cannot refer them to other agencies if they are eligible.
- They give assistance out in the form of vouchers.
- If it is an emergency situation the city must make a decision within 72 hours.
 - They must provide the assistance before receiving all documentation, then allow the person 7 days to turn in documentation.
- NH Legal Assistance wants to be more involved with the issues people are having at City Welfare.
 - If a client is denied or treated unfairly, contact Candace, and she will assist the client.
- Once clients are receiving assistance, they must record what they spend very thoroughly.
 - They should also report all income and resources.
 - This includes loans from friends/family members.
 - Those able to work must prove they are searching for jobs.
 - Those who have applied for social security and disability must provide a doctor's note saying they cannot work.
 - First time applicants do not need to provide receipts.
- Those receiving APTD cash are not allowed to apply for Welfare unless it's for medical assistance or prescriptions.
- Clients should be informed of their decision through a written notice.

- Whether they are accepted or denied.
- They only have 5 days to appeal the decision, so they need to contact NH Legal Assistance as soon as possible.

Changing National Priorities

- Cathy Kuhn attended the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) conference in Seattle, and shared what she learned with the CoC.
- The homeless services system is going to change over the next couple of years.
 - HUD and NAEH are driving the changes.
- The CoC model will change.
 - The main criticism is that people are staying longer and longer in emergency shelters.
 - They want us to change the way we view shelters.
 - Transitional Housing is also being criticized.
 - It is very service intensive and not showing the best outcomes.
 - It is very expensive.
 - It is believed that service providers are not adequately assessing the needs of the clients.
- They have developed a revised model of homeless care services.
 - They want every CoC to have a centralized intake and assessment system.
 - The system should include a centralized/coordinated process for participant intake, assessment, and referral.
 - The system should cover a geographical area.
 - Either by region, city, or state.
 - It should be easily accessed by clients.
 - There must be a standardized way of assessing people.
 - Everyone must be assessed in the same way.
 - We must do this to continue receiving HUD funding.
 - This does not just include the NOFA but all HUD funding.
 - There are positives to this new system.
 - It could reduce the burden on the clients.
 - Create easier access to services.
 - Help to prioritize clients' needs.
 - And target services more efficiently.
 - The state is already focusing on this.
 - They have formed a committee which Susan, Cathy, and Heather will be serving on.
 - There will be an increased focus on Rapid Rehousing (RRH).
 - They want to get people out of shelters right away and rehoused into permanent housing.
 - They want light touch services.
 - They want us to focus on housing the clients and connecting them to the necessary services right away.
 - The idea that we can always give more, but we can't take away services already provided but not needed.
 - They want us to have better crisis responses – an immediate response to clients.
 - When clients are first trying to enter the system they want us to discourage them.
 - Those who still enter the system would be served with RRH support – light services.
 - For example, first they may only need \$50 to pay an application fee for housing.
 - If they return in need of money for a security deposit we'd provide that and see if that sticks, etc.

- There would be a small amount of permanent supportive housing for those who really cannot maintain housing.
- Katie will email Cathy's power point out to the CoC.

General Discussion

- United Way's VITA program is still assisting people with their taxes.
 - Call 211 to make an appointment.
- United Way partnered with Family Wise to provide prescription discount cards.
 - The cards provide a percentage off of certain prescriptions.
 - To get a discount card call 211 (they will mail them to clients), go into the drug store (some have them on the counter), or print the card off the 211 website.
- 211 will begin providing intake, referral, and data management for a new initiative by the NH Banking Dept., NH Dept. of Justice, and NH Housing to provide foreclosure counseling to people.
 - There will be a form available on 211nh.org.
- PIT Count numbers have been released.
- Harbor Homes' veteran housing at 335 Somerville Street in Manchester is scheduled to open on Flag Day.

Committee Updates

- Leadership Committee:
 - We are working on strengthening the committees.
 - Feel free to bring any committee issues to Leadership.
 - We need to have one CoC meeting where we focus on committee goals.
 - These goals should be realistic and measurable.
 - We will discuss committee goals at the May General Assembly meeting.
- Data Collection Committee
 - PIT Count numbers were released.
 - Manchester numbers under HUD's criteria are down slightly.
 - Doubled-up numbers were way up from last year.
 - Overall numbers were up from last year.
- Homeless Liaison Committee
 - Jennifer and Jay held a youth focus group last month.
 - The results of the focus group were interesting.
 - Minutes are available on the MCoC website.

Minutes Prepared By

Katie Simpson, VISTA
MCoC Coordinator